only reward I will aspire to at the end of my mandate. This is no time for hesitation or doubt. This is a moment for decisions and courage. Long and difficult is the road leading to the Colombia we yearn for. Let us begin now! Tomorrow will be another day!

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, September 21, 1998, the federal debt stood at $5,510,750,292,549.80 (Five trillion, five hundred ten billion, seven hundred fifty million, two hundred ninety-two thousand, five hundred forty-nine dollars and eighty cents).

Five years ago, September 21, 1993, the federal debt stood at $4,392,902,000,000 (Four trillion, three hundred ninety-two billion, nine hundred two million).

Ten years ago, September 21, 1988, the federal debt stood at $2,596,653,000,000 (Two trillion, five hundred ninety-six billion, six hundred fifty-three million).

Fifteen years ago, September 21, 1983, the federal debt stood at $1,354,377,000,000 (One trillion, three hundred fifty-four billion, three hundred seventy-seven million).

Twenty-five years ago, September 21, 1973, the federal debt stood at $459,603,000,000 (Four hundred fifty-nine billion, six hundred three million) which reflects a debt increase of more than $5 trillion—$5,051,147,292,549.80 (Five trillion, fifty-one billion, one hundred forty-seven million, two hundred ninety-two thousand, five hundred forty-nine dollars and eighty cents) during the past 25 years.

SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, in a time of unprecedented economic prosperity, we have seen a reduction in inflation and unemployment yet a full-time minimum wage earner makes almost $3,000 below the poverty level—a mere $10,712 per year. No one who works full time should be poor in this country—it's time to raise the minimum wage.

Republicans say that raising the minimum wage will cause job loss and put undue burdens on business owners. But in a recent study conducted by Princeton economists David Card and Alan Krueger, their analysis of New Jersey's minimum wage increase in 1992 showed that employment in fast food restaurants grew at least as quickly as in neighboring Pennsylvania where the minimum wage stayed the same. Also noted in the study was that higher wages actually benefitted employers—turnover expenses were reduced and productivity improved due to better motivated and more stable employees. Mr. President, it's time to raise the minimum wage.

Additionally, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that since the 1996–97 wage increases took effect, 4 million new jobs have been created and unemployment is at 4.5%—its lowest level in a generation. In fact, a study by the Economic Policy Institute documents that there was no measurable negative effect on jobs. The only measurable effect was on workers—they received the pay increases they deserved. Mr. President, it's time to raise the minimum wage.

Contrary to what has been said by my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle, workers who will benefit from this increase are not primarily teenagers from high income families. 70% are adults over the age of 20 and forty percent of minimum wage workers are the sole bread winners in their families. As a matter of fact, the average minimum wage earner brings home half of their family's income. Additionally, 60% of minimum wage earners are women. Mr. President, it's time to raise the minimum wage.

In 1979, minimum wage earners needed to work an average of 40 hours per week to stay out of poverty. Today those same workers must work 52 hours. By raising the minimum wage one dollar by the year 2000 we will restore its purchasing power to its mid-1970's level. With unemployment levels 50% to 75% lower and inflation rates 2 to 3 times lower, we can afford to restore that purchasing power. Mr. President, it's time to raise the minimum wage.

It is time to honor the American working people with a fair wage. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, ''Our nation, so richly endowed with natural resources and with a capable and industrious population, should be able to devise ways and means of insuring to all able-bodied working men and women a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.'' I call upon my colleagues in the Senate to begin narrowing the gap between rich and poor in this country. We must help bring economic prosperity to the men and women who feed our families, care for our children and elderly parents, and play by the rules. It's time to help working families and it's time to raise the minimum wage.

CAL RIPKEN'S STREAK OF PLAYING 2,632 CONSECUTIVE GAMES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, Sunday, September 20, 1998 marked the end of an era in sports. Cal Ripken, baseball's Iron Man, took a well-deserved day off. As the Baltimore Sun put it, ''The Streak died of natural causes. It was 2,632.''

Cal Ripken sat in the dugout Sunday night not because of injury, or illness, or a manager's decision. Cal voluntarily took himself out of the lineup because he felt he was not playing up to his own standards, and would not contribute enough to the team. Cal's quietly monumental decision exemplifies the dignity and class with which he has conducted himself throughout his career.

When Cal Ripken began his streak in 1982, Ronald Reagan was President, I was a Congresswoman, ''Dallas'' was the most popular TV show, and the movie ''ET'' was setting box office records. A baby born that year is about to be a junior in high school. Ryan Minor, who played in Cal's place Sunday night, was 8 years old.

I was in the stands September 6, 1995, the night that Cal played game number 2,131. I've watched history being made on the Senate floor, but that night I watched history being made on the glorious green field of Camden Yards. I will never forget the joy we all felt as the banners rolled, the light bulbs flashed, and Cal took his victory lap.

Records are made to be broken, but I can't imagine Cal's record being broken in our lifetime. The next closest player, Albert Belle, would have to play in every game for the next 14 years to equal The Streak.

What Cal has accomplished is simple: Every day for the last 16 years, he got up, got dressed, and went to work. He represents the old-fashioned ethic displayed by millions of Marylanders every day as they work hard, play by the rules, and take care of their families. It's not fancy, it's not flashy, but it is the glue that holds our communities, our society, and our nation together.

So to Cal Ripken, I say hats off, thank you for being you, and thank you for showing all of us how it's supposed to be done.''

THE OMNIBUS PATENT ACT OF 1998

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been working diligently along with Senators DASCHLE, BINGAMAN, CLELAND, BOXER, HARKIN, and LIEBERMAN to get this measure considered and passed by the Senate. It an important measure to America's future.

Along with all the Democratic cosponsors of the bill, I signed on to offering our patent bill as an amendment to this bankruptcy bill. I helped provide an opportunity for this amendment in the unanimous consent agreement accepted by the Senate on Friday September, 11th. It is long past time for the Senate to consider this patent reform legislation.

Unfortunately, Republican opposition to the bill has prevented Senate consideration for more than a year. This is another example of how secret, anonymous holds on the Republican side are preventing important legislation from being considered by the Senate. I deeply regret that those same Republican objections have now succeeded in preventing our Republican cosponsor, the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, from even offering this amendment to the bill in the amendment spot that we had reserved for that purpose. I believe that there is strong support for this measure. I cannot guarantee that all 45 Democratic Senators will vote for it, but I do know that no Democrat has prevented or is now preventing its consideration.

I want to thank Secretary Daley and the Administration for their unflagging support of effective patent reform. Our patent bill would be good for Vermont, good for American innovators of all sizes, and good for America. Unfortunately, the Republican majority or some secret minority of that Republican majority will not allow patent reform to proceed.

OVERVIEW OF THE PATENT BILL

The Patent Bill would reform the U.S. patent system in important ways. It would: reduce legal fees that are paid by inventors and companies; eliminate duplication of research efforts and accelerate research into new areas; increase the value of patents to inventors and companies; and facilitate U.S. inventors and companies' research, development, and commercialization of inventions.

In Vermont, we have a number of independent inventors and small companies. It is, therefore, especially important to me that this bill be one that helps them as well as the larger companies in Vermont like IBM. So I talked to independent inventors and representatives of smaller companies to see what reforms they recommended. I have tried to make sure that their recommendations were incorporated into the Patent Bill as the legislation has advanced through Congress.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The reforms that would be implemented with the passage of this legislation have been subject to careful and deliberate consideration by Congress. In fact, over the past several years, Congress has held eight Congressional hearings with over 80 witnesses testifying about the various proposals incorporated in the Patent Bill.

Republican and Democratic Administrations alike, reaching back to the Johnson Administration, have supported these reforms. Last year, five former Patent Commissioners sent a letter to the President and to the members of the Senate supporting the Patent Bill.

In addition to the thorough consideration that has been given these reforms over the years, the Senate has given close scrutiny this Congress to the bill before us today. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on this legislation on May 7, 1997. The Committee heard testimony of Senator FRANK LAUTENBERG, Representative HENRY HYDE; Representative HOWARD COBLE; Representative DANA ROHRABACHER; Representative MARCY KAPTUR; the Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks; the Executive Director of the American Intellectual Property Law Association; the Vice President of the International Trademark Association; the President and CEO of a small business in Utah; and Bill Parker, President of the Vermont Inventors Association.

After the hearing, Senator HATCH and I worked to address the concerns of independent inventors, small businesses, universities, the Administration, and other Senators. We made several changes to the legislation, which I think significantly improved the Patent Bill. Let me give you some examples of the changes that we made to the legislation: (1) any applicant who does not apply for a patent overseas can elect NOT to have early publication of their patent (2) any applicant who diligently prosecutes a patent application will receive a full 17 years of patent protection; (3) non-profit research laboratories or other nonprofit entities such as universities, research centers, or hospitals can petition the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks for additional patent protection; and (4) the United States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) must develop statewide computer networks with remote library sites to enhance access to information in state patent and trademark depository libraries for independent inventors and small businesses in rural states.

On May 22, Senator HATCH and I offered a substitute amendment with these changes. Every member of the Committee, save one, voted in favor of the Hatch/Leahy substitute amendment.

After the markup, the White House Conference on Small Businesses, which consists of over 2000 delegates elected from hundreds of thousands of active small businesses nationwide, made additional suggestions on how to improve the bill. Senator HATCH and I agreed to incorporate their suggested changes into a substitute amendment to the Patent Bill, and I am pleased to report that as a result, the White House Conference on Small Businesses, the National Association of Women Business Owners, the National Venture Capital Association, National Small Business United, and the Small Business Technology Coalition has concluded that, if enacted, this bill would be of great benefit to small businesses.

TITLE BY TITLE ANALYSIS

Unfortunately, because of Republican opposition to this bipartisan bill, the Senate will have no opportunity to consider this legislation to assist U.S. inventors small and large. I find this particularly unfortunate since our Patent Bill was geared toward improving the operational efficiency at the PTO and making government smaller and leaner. I would like to provide a title-by-title overview of the substitute amendment to the Patent Bill that Senator HATCH and I were prepared to offer as an amendment to the bankruptcy bill.

Title I of the amendment: PTO reforms

Title I of the amendment would have made some modest, albeit important, reforms to the PTO. It provides that the PTO shall not be subject to any administratively or statutorily imposed limitation on positions or personnel. This should allow the PTO to hire the necessary number of examiners to review the increasing number of applications received by the office. Title I also creates a Patent Management Advisory Board and a Trademark Management Advisory Board. Of the five members of the Patent Management Advisory Board, not more than three shall be members of the same political party, at least one member shall be an independent inventor, and the members shall include individuals who represent small and large entity patent applicants located in the United States in proportion to the number of applications files by such members.

Title II of the amendment: Publication of Patent Applications

Title II of the amendment responds to the concerns of independent inventors and small businesses regarding the matter of 18-month publication. These concerns were articulated at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing by the President of the Vermont Inventors Association, Bill Parker. Mr. Parker suggested giving applicants who only file in the United States a choice whether or not to publish early. He also recommended that we enhance the protections granted to those who choose 18-month publication if we wish to encourage them to take that course.

Title II does both of these things. In particular, it allows any applicant to avoid publication before the granting of the patent simply by making such a request upon filing the application and by certifying that their application has not—and will not—be published abroad. The substitute also provides for the issuance of patents on individual claims in published applications as they are approved, rather than waiting for the disposition of all claims contained in such an application, as now occurs. This allows applicants to gain full patent protection—including reasonable royalties, damages, and attorneys fees when appropriate—for some of their component inventions earlier than they would have under the original draft of the bill.

This new Title II in our substitute amendment will benefit U.S. researchers and manufacturers who will have early English language access to the applications filed with the PTO that are of foreign origin. This bill measures the 18-month publication period from the earliest patent application date anywhere in the world. Since foreign-origin applications typically are filed abroad 12 months before they are filed here, those applications will be published 6 months after they are filed in the U.S.; that is a year earlier than domestic-origin applications. This will level the playing field with foreign countries that already are publishing our applications in their languages within 6 months after our applications are filed abroad.

Title III of the amendment: Patent Term Restoration

In 1995, GATT changed the U.S. patent term from 17 years from issuance to 20 years from filing. On average, this new term does not result in loss of patent term. It is still possible, however, that an individual patentee would have

less patent term under the post-GATT term than under the pre-GATT term. To remedy this situation, Title II of the substitute amendment restores patent term lost to ''unusual administrative delay'' by the PTO and guarantees all diligent applicants a minimum 17-year term.

More specifically, the 1995 law authorizes patent extensions for only 5 years, and authorizes extensions only for PTO delays occurring in three specific situations: interference proceedings, imposition of secrecy orders, and appellate review. Title II of the substitute amendment makes extensions available to compensate for any type of delay by the PTO—extensions up to 10 years in the case of appellate review or unusual administrative delay, and unlimited extensions for delays caused by secrecy orders and interference proceedings.

Title IV of the amendment: Prior Domestic Commercial Use

Title IV of the amendment will provide protection against an infringement suit for anyone who has commercially used an invention for more than a year before another person files for a patent on an invention. In raising this defense, the burden of proof will be on the person claiming the defense, not the patent holder. This provision will protect the unsophisticated entrepreneur from being ruined. Under current law, an independent entrepreneur who has invested perhaps his or her entire life savings to produce and market an invention can be shut down completely by someone else who comes along much later and gets a patent on the same invention. A prior use right will protect independent entrepreneurs from this financial disaster.

Title V of the amendment: Patent Reexamination Reform

Although the goal of the original reexamination provisions—reducing legal bills for patent applicants—was laudable, I was concerned that the legislation protect against harassment by third parties. Title V of the amendment now requires that everyone who requests reexamination of a patent to identify the real party in interest that they represent. It continues to limit the grounds for patent invalidity that can be raised during a reexamination proceeding to earlier patents and publications. Grounds that require evaluation of live testimony cannot be raised. Parties are prohibited from requesting a second reexamination until the first reexamination is completed. Parties cannot raise issues during reexamination that they raised or could have raised in earlier court litigation. Neither can they raise issues in court litigation that they raised or could have raised in an earlier examination. Furthermore, no reexamination proceeding can ever be started unless the Commissioner makes a determination that a substantial new question of patentability is raised. The Commissioner's determination not to start a reexamination is unappealable. In all of these ways, the re-examination provisions in the substitute amendment will provide an alternative to the current costly and time-consuming process of Federal litigation and at the same time, protect patent applicants against undue harassment.

Title VI of the amendment: Miscellaneous Provisions

The final title of the amendment contains several lower-profile, but nonetheless important and needed changes to American patent law. A matter of special interest to me is the section I suggested be added in this Title to enhance access to patent information. I have long thought that electronic access should be more widespread and want to work with the PTO to ensure the effective implementation of statewide electronic accessibility of patent information in rural states and eventually in all areas to make it easier for inventors to study prior art and make further advances. This should be of particular benefit to Vermont, which just recently established a patent and trademark depository library.

Also important is the section that clarifies the authority of the Copyright Office. It is intended to codify the traditional role of the Copyright Office and to confirm the Register's existing areas of jurisdiction. The new subsection 701(b)(1) reflects the Copyright Office's longstanding role as advisor to Congress on matters within its competence. This includes copyright and all matters within the scope of title 17 of the U.S. Code. The new subsection (b)(2) reflects the Copyright Office's longstanding role in advising federal agencies on matters within its competence. For example, the Copyright Office advises the U.S. Trade Representative and the State Department on an ongoing basis on the adequacy of foreign copyright laws, and serves as a technical consultant to those agencies in bilateral, regional and multilateral consultations or negotiations with other countries on copyright-related issues. The new subsection (b)(3) reflects the Copyright Office's longstanding role as a key participant in international meetings of various kinds, including as part of U.S. delegations as authorized by the Executive Branch, serving as substantive experts on matters within the Copyright Office's competence. Recent examples of the Copyright Office acting in the capacity include its central role on the U.S. delegation that negotiated the two new WIPO treaties at the 1996 Diplomatic Conference in Geneva, and its ongoing contributions of technical assistance in the TRIPS Council of the World Trade Organization and the Register's role as a featured speaker at numerous WIPO conferences. The new subsection (b)(4) describes the studies and programs that the Copyright Office has long carried out as the agency responsible for administering the copyright law and other chapters of title 17. Among the most important of these studies historically was a series of comprehensive reports on various issues produced in the 1960's as the foundation of the last general revision of U.S. copyright law, enacted as the 1976 Copyright Act. Most recently the Copyright Office has completed reports on the cable and satellite compulsory licences, legal protection for databases, and the economic and policy implications of term extension. The reference to ''programs'' includes such projects as the conferences the Copyright Office co-sponsored in 1996–97 on the subject of technology-based intellectual property management, and the International Copyright Institutes that the Copyright Office has conducted for foreign government officials at least annually over the past decade, often in cooperation with WIPO. The new subsection (b)(5) makes clear that the functions and duties set forth in this subsection are illustrative, not exhaustive. The Register of Copyrights would continue to be able to carry out other functions under her general authority under subsection 701(a), or as Congress may direct.

Today's inventors and creators can be much like those of Thomas Jefferson's day—individuals in a shop, garage or home lab. They can also be teams of scientists working in our largest corporations or at our colleges and universities. Our nation's patent laws should be fair to American innovators of all kinds—independent inventors, small businesses, venture capitalists and larger corporations. To maintain America's preeminence in the realm of technology, which dates back to the birth of this republic, we need to modernize our patent system and patent office. Our inventors know this and that is why they support this legislation.

I have received letters of endorsements of S. 507, which I placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on June 23, July 10 and July 16, from the following coalitions and companies: the White House Conference on Small Businesses, the National Association of Women Business Owners, the Small Business Technology Coalition, National Small Business United, the National Venture Capital Association, the 21st Century Patent Coalition, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America; the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufactures of American (Parma), the American Automobile Manufacturers Association, the Software Publishers Association, the Semiconductor Industry Association, the Business Software Alliance, the American Electronics Association, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the International Trademark Association, IBM, 3M, Intel, Caterpillar, AMP, and Hewlett-Packard.

In addition, I have letters of support of the Patent Bill from the National Association of Manufacturers, TSM/Rockwell International, Obsidian, and Allied Signal.

I am deeply disappointed that the Senate is being prevented from considering this important legislation by Republican recalcitrance. American inventors deserve better and America's future is being short changed.

THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE MEDICARE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1998

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Reinstatement of the Medicare Rehabilitation Act of 1998, introduced by Senators REID and GRASSLEY. I have always been a strong advocate for the senior citizens of our nation and I believe this bill will help provide a safety net for some of our sickest seniors. I was pleased to recently join my colleagues as a cosponsor of this bill for two reasons—it repeals an unnecessary $1,500 cap on Medicare outpatient rehabilitation services and will allow seniors to receive treatment services that are essential to their health.

Every year our elderly are threatened by strokes, multiple injuries, and diseases. Seniors who suffer from strokes and multiple diseases in a given year often have complex health care needs that require costly, comprehensive treatment. One study has estimated that almost 13% of all Medicare beneficiaries or 635,000 seniors who receive rehabilitative services outside of a hospital setting will exceed the $1,500 cap. The treatment that they desperately need would exceed the $1,500 cap and require seniors to pay out of pocket for services or seek treatment in a hospital outpatient department in order for Medicare to cover their treatment.

How could our senior citizens be treated this way? How did this come to be? Well let me tell you, in 1997 Congress passed the Balanced Budget Act. Within that Act we placed a $1,500 cap on outpatient rehabilitation services. Limits on the cap were adopted without adequate committee hearings and a detailed analysis was not conducted by HCFA to determine the likely effects on beneficiaries' ability to obtain medically necessary services.

This was a mistake, but fortunately we can correct it by passing this legislation. The Reinstatement of the Medicare Rehabilitation Act ensures senior citizens the right to receive the medical services they need to recover. Under this bill, senior citizens will no longer be hindered by financial limitations on rehabilitation services and seniors who don't live near a hospital won't be forced to travel there just to have Medicare pay for their treatment services. I don't want an 85-year-old woman who has had a stroke and is trying to regain her ability to speak or eat to have to travel to a hospital 30 minutes away to receive treatment.

I want to let those who depend on Medicare know that we are working to protect their health. While we must continue to work diligently to protect the solvency of Medicare, we can't let seniors who need rehabilitation services fall through the cracks. I salute the sponsors of this bill and urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

AT 12:23 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1856) to amend the fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a volunteer pilot project at one national wildlife refuge in each United States Fish and Wildlife Service region, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 326. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol on September 23, 1998, for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3248. An act to provide dollars to the classroom.

H.R. 4569. An act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1695. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in the State of Colorado as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following joint resolution was read the second time and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 56. Joint resolution expressing the sense of Congress in support of the existing Federal legal process for determining the safety and efficacy of drugs, including marijuana and other Schedule I drugs, for medicinal use.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC–7047. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Second Half FY 1997 Semi-Annual Report on Program Activities to Facilitate Weapons Destruction and Nonproliferation in the Former Soviet Union''; transmitted jointly, pursuant to section 1208 of Public Law 103–160, to the Committee on Appropriations, to the Committee on Armed Services, and to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–7048. A communication from the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on state compliance with terms of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–7049. A communication from the Chairman of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board transmitting the Board's annual report for 1997; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–7050. A communication from the Acting Director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Exemptions from the Requirement to Report Large Currency Transactions Pursuant to the Bank Secrecy Act—Phase II'' (RIN1506–AA12) received on September 17, 1998; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–7051. A communication from the Members of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's budget request for fiscal year 2000; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC–7052. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the United States-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program for the period July 1996 through July 1997; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC–7053. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Small Business Size Regulations and Government Contracting Assistance Regulations; Very Small Business Concern'' received on September 16, 1998; to the Committee on Small Business.

EC–7054. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disaster Loan Program (Agricultural Enterprises)'' received on September 16, 1998; to the Committee on Small Business.

EC–7055. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disaster Loan Program (Eligibility Criteria)'' received on September 16, 1998; to the Committee on Small Business.

EC–7056. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Small Business Size Regulations and Government Contracting Assistance Regulations; Very Small Business Concern'' received on September 16, 1998; to the Committee on Small Business.

EC–7057. A communication from the Chief of the Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule